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# College of Health Sciences e-Newsletter, April 2018

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*Old Dominion University*

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This year's Interprofessional Education Day drew a very large, diverse group of students.

## IPE Day's focus: Calm before Storm

Disaster preparedness takes center stage at this year's event

For its fourth year, Interprofessional Education Day welcomed a crowd of excited students and faculty open to the spirit of collaboration.

Following a warm welcome by Kimberly Adams Tufts, Interim Associate Dean for IPE, the event got under way. This year's focus, titled "Disaster Preparedness 101: An Interprofessional Approach," was coordinated by the



IPE, please see page 4

Maureen Boshier, right, one of the faculty facilitators works with students.





**Dean's Message: Assistant Dean Debbie Bauman**

## Is spring here yet? Anxiety is in the air

Here we are again welcoming spring with the biggest student celebration of the year! Commencement is just a few days away. At #ODU18 the students are counting down: "just a few more days," "only one more exam," "she turned her can'ts to cans," and "hey, anyone have extra graduation tix?" Excitement is building and so is anxiety. If you use Twitter, send your students an uplifting message on their upcoming exams or commencement..

Many of us are just settling down after the frenzy and elation of Admitted Students Day in late March. The annual University Admissions event gives 3,000 freshman and their family members the ODU Experience.

Here's a quick one-liner to lessen your stress: "How do you tell someone winter is over? You spring it on them!"



Debbie Bauman

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### From the Editor

## 3 years later, the journey is almost done

In Spring Semester 2015 I began my journey. I had done my homework and found a program that fit my passions: a Master of Arts in Humanities with a focus on health care and communication.

Through the program, I was able to build a curriculum that dovetailed nicely with my new job at the College of Health Sciences and my career as a journalist.

The courses I've taken have been fascinating: Children's Culture & The Media, Medical Geography, and Health Communication to name a few. Instructors such as Professors Avi Santo, Sarah Florini, and Michael Allen and Gary Beck have challenged me to work hard and stay the course. And it has all paid off.

On May 4, instead of reading names of graduates at commencement (which I've been doing for the past couple semesters), someone will be reading my name as I receive my masters. As I complete this journey, of course, it won't stop there. I'll take a short breath and then launch my next quest.



Irvin B. Harrell

## SCHOOL OF NURSING

# Nurse practitioner named Fulbright recipient

By Irvin B. Harrell

Deborah Gray, director of the family nurse practitioner program at Old Dominion University, recently was chosen for a Core Scholar Fulbright Award. The honor will give her an opportunity to work with the University of Botswana (southern Africa) and the World Health Organization's Center for Nursing and Midwifery in Gaborone, Botswana, to increase access to health care and the number of advanced practice nurses in Africa.

To Gray, who lives in Virginia Beach, the award is truly a dream come true.

"It gives me the opportunity to follow my passion. For one, I'd like improve population health and empower other nurses and other people to get involve in doing that as well," she said. "Secondly, I'd like to expand the scope of advanced practice nurses and that's what I'm going to be doing in Africa."

The Fulbright Program, which aims to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries, is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. Gray joins the ranks of distinguished participants in the program. Fulbright alumni have become heads of state, judges, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, CEOs, and university presidents, as well as leading journalists, artists, scientists, and teachers. They include 59 Nobel Laureates, 82 Pulitzer Prize winners, 71 MacArthur Fellows, 16 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients, and thousands of leaders across the private, public and non-profit sectors.

Gray was raised in Rocky Mount, N.C., with bold aspirations that took a little time to get focused.

"I wanted to change the world but I didn't know quite how," she said. "I had not envisioned being a nurse. I wanted to be an astronaut, just like everybody else in the '60s."

Eventually, Gray earned a degree in health policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and considered going to law school. But something changed her when received a special grant through UNC that allowed



Deborah Gray



FULBRIGHT, page 4

Gray visits United Nations, working on a fellowship program.



## FULBRIGHT, from page 3

her visit other parts of the world.

“I visited Nepal in South Asia and that’s where I decided I needed to change what I was doing,” she said. “The lack of care, the need, the health issues. Things were very different. I wanted to work in health care and work with people who didn’t have access to care.”

From there she pursued and earned a Master’s of Science in Nursing in 1986 at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. It would be in Canada that she would meet her husband, Dr. Brian Edmunds, a physical therapist and former assistant professor at Hampton University.



During her travels, Deborah Gray has had the opportunity in 2015 to teach students in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, with the NGO Colleagues in Care.

The couple headed south to Florida, where Gray received her post-master’s to become a nurse practitioner at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Family considerations brought Gray and her husband to Hampton Roads in 1991, where they bought a house in Sandbridge, a beautiful coastal community in Virginia Beach. There, she worked in private practice for a bit, before teaching and working on a doctorate at ODU. She taught evening classes in pharmacology. She was also a teaching assistant for master’s students.

“I was a research advisor for DNP (Doctor in Nurse Practice) students,” she said. “It helped me focus a little more on what my purpose was and what my goals were.”

Gray received her DNP at ODU in 2012, with expertise in primary care and preventive care, pharmacology, complementary and integrative health/medicine. She received the first DNP scholar award upon graduation. Other accolades would soon follow.

In 2016, Gray led a delegation of undergraduate and graduate students from ODU to Guatemala, administering vaccines and delivering healthcare services to hundreds of children in need through ChildFund’s community partner, Corazón de los Niños. In 2014, she was given the Nurse Practitioner of Excellence Award by the Tidewater Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners. The same year she was a finalist for Virginia Nurse of the Year. She became an Entsminger Entrepreneurial Fellow at ODU in 2016 and received ODU’s Outstanding Teaching with Technology Award in 2017. And this year she was selected to be a fellow of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.

Gray talks about how things in life can line you up for other things and how your passion helps you align those things and make sense of your purpose. There’s no wonder she teaches a course in personal strategic planning in the DNP program.

“Being a nurse practitioner is the best of both worlds. They have the holistic approach of a nurse, but they also have the diagnostic/thinking abilities of a physician,” she said. “There are so many opportunities to work in so many settings. And Fulbright takes it to the next level.”

## IPE, from page 1

School of Community and Environmental Health, chaired by Dr. Muge Akpınar-Elci. The March 28<sup>th</sup> event was held at the Ted Constant Convocation Center's Big Blue Room.

Dr. Margaret M. Kitt, deputy director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), was this year's keynote speaker. Dr. Kitt spoke extensively about her role in ensuring safety in the faces of many national disaster scenarios. Dr. Kitt was a senior flight surgeon in the U.S. Air Force, where she served for 14 years. In 2002, she joined the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Public Health Service at the NIOSH Division of Respiratory Disease Studies. During that period, she also worked with the World Health Organization's Collaborating Center in Reproductive Health on an HHS Secretarial Initiative in Afghanistan. In August 2007, she became the NIOSH Associate Director for the Emergency Preparedness and Response Office. She subsequently served as the Coordinator for the Afghanistan Health Initiative, at the HHS Office of Global Health Affairs until 2009, when she returned as the NIOSH deputy director. Dr. Kitt opened the floor for questions after her address.



Dr. Margaret M. Kitt, deputy director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, gave this year's keynote address.



An example of the student projects on preparing for a hurricane.

Afterward, several students engaged the attendees with poster presentations. The poster session allowed for feedback from the audience.

Last but certainly not least was this year's case study group activity, which provide a setting for students with diverse backgrounds and health care interests to engage in a project related to disaster preparedness. Using the CDC principles of disaster preparedness – get a kit, make a plan, and be informed – several groups of students each with a faculty facilitator devise several disaster preparedness plans in the event of a hurricane. They documented their works on posters and posted them up around the Big Blue Room to allow for critiques from all of the attendees.

This year's attendance was the largest since Interprofessional Education Day was launched, including students from Hampton University's pharmacy program, Eastern Virginia Medical School, and ODU's Master of Science in Education – Counseling Program.

## GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

# Student continues pursuit to teach dental hygiene

By Irvin B. Harrell

Sometimes a smile can say a lot and go a long way. Just ask dental hygiene senior Adaira Howell, one of the exemplary 2018 graduates in the College of Health Sciences. The 21-year-old from Norfolk beams when she talks about her goal in life: “I love smiles. It’s the first thing I notice. Why not help others have the smiles they’ve always wanted.”

Dental hygiene wasn’t always Howell’s passion, she says. For a while she found an interest in psychology. Her family left Norfolk after middle school for Crane, a small town in rural Indiana, where the Army had re-stationed her stepfather. It was there that her plans for the future would change.

“My dentist at the time told me that I could come shadow him in his office,” she said. “In Crane, a lot of people had not gone to the dentist before and that kind of peaked my interest as well. So I did some research into the dental hygiene field.”

Upon graduating high school, Howell planned to return to Virginia and found she had two state dental hygiene programs to choose from: Old Dominion University and Virginia Commonwealth University.

“I also knew I wanted to be in Norfolk to be with my grandfather, so ODU was the best option for me,” she says.

Howell’s mother spent more than 10 years as a third-grade teacher and her stepfather retired from the Army after more than 30 years of service. Her only sibling, her younger sister Qira, is finishing up high school and incidentally has been one of her patients during clinicals.

Ask her about her experiences at ODU, and her smile lights up the room. “It’s been wonderful. Great professors. I’m very lucky,” she says. She lists Associate Professor Tara Newcomb as her most inspirational faculty member.

“I loved her personality, her teaching style,” she says. “You can tell that she really cares about her students. She took the time to really work with each one of us to teach us how to be great dental hygienists.”

It was Newcomb that motivated Howell to pursue her master’s in dental hygiene at ODU. Having someone to trust and confide in has been key as Howell pursued her education. Newcomb has been that mentor, she says.

“Sometimes other people see your potential before you do,” Howell says. “That’s what you need to help push you forward.”

As she continues her education at ODU, Howell says her ultimate goal is to be a university professor and teach dental hygiene. During her bachelors, she has volunteered at an ambulatory care clinic as an oral health educator, which has stoked her ambitions. Through her volunteerism she has had the opportunity to talk to people from underserved areas and help them understand why preventive care is so important when it comes to dental hygiene.

“Sometimes people simply don’t know what they need to know,” she says. “We don’t just clean teeth. We educate the public, that a big part of what we do. That’s why I want to teach.”



Adaira Howell in her element



# When it rains, it pours

Director of the Center for Global Health doubly honored this spring



Muge Akpinar-Elci receives the President John R. Broderick Diversity Champion Award this spring from the president and Assistant Vice President for Equity & Diversity Renee Dunman, left.



From right, Bonnie Van Lunen, Dr. Muge Akpinar-Elci, and former Dean Shelley Mishoe pose at the 2018 Women of Distinction Awards. Akpinar-Elci received the honor this year.



## College of Health Sciences recruit at April's Healthcare Career Expo

Clockwise from top left: Dental hygiene students speak with high-schoolers. Professor Deborah Krzyzaniak connects with a student. Assistant Dean Debbie Bauman tells a couple students about the programs offered by the college.



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## FACULTY RETIREMENTS

# Somma, McCombs bid farewell to college

Two of the College of Health Sciences' long-term faculty, Dr. Thomas Somma and Professor Gayle McCombs, will retire this summer.

Dr. Somma has been at Old Dominion University for more than 40 years. He has served as a teacher, administrator, researcher and author. He taught 18 different courses and their associated labs, served as a program director and then as chair for 21 years. He also established five new allied health programs.

Dr. Somma received his B.S. in Chemistry from Frederick College in Portsmouth, his M.S. from Virginia Tech in Biochemistry, and his Ed.D from the College of William & Mary. He joined ODU in 1978 as an assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences teaching courses in medical technology and serving as its program director. In 1987, he became chair of the School of Medical Laboratory Sciences in the new College of Health Sciences, serving in that administrative position for 21 years. During that time he established the following new programs: Nuclear Medicine (1987), Cytotechnology (1987), Histotechnology (2007), Military Transition/Distant Med. Tech. degree Program (1996), and the undergraduate certificate Program in Molecular Diagnostics (2007).

Professor McCombs, who came to ODU in 1989, received her graduate degree from the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill and her undergraduate degree from the University of West Florida. Before coming to ODU, she completed a teaching internship in Adelaide, Australia, and worked as faculty at UNC and in the community college systems in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida.

At ODU, she was a graduate program director, teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in Educational Concepts for the Health Professional and coordinating clinical research activities for the School of Dental Hygiene. Professor McCombs served on the American Dental Hygienists' Association's Council on Research, as symposium organizer for the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) Oral Health Research Section, and was chair for the Dental Hygiene Education Section of the American Dental Education Association (ADEA). Her main research interests were in new dental product and device testing.



Above, Tom Somma works in the lab. At left, Gayle McCombs poses with Big Blue.



**2018 MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY**

Building on tradition, Interim Dean Richardean Benjamin welcomed members of the military to the College of Health Sciences for the annual Military Appreciation Day on Monday, April 9.



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# Upcoming Events

## MAY

May 2	Exams End
May 4 & 5	Spring Commencement, Ted Constant Convocation Center
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday (University Closed)

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## Award winner



Interim Dean Richardean Benjamin presents BSBS student Thomas Johnson with an award at the African American and Hispanic/Latino Male Academic Recognition Ceremony on Monday, April 2.